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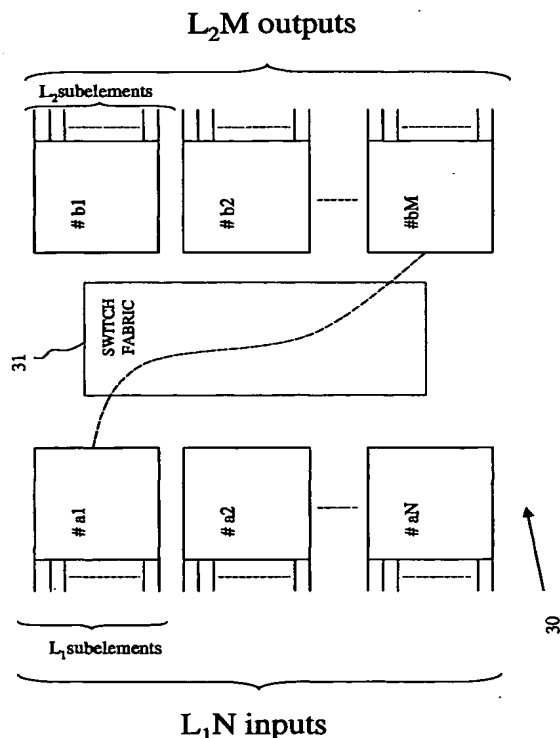
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| <p>(51) <b>International Patent Classification<sup>7</sup>:</b> <b>H04Q 3/68</b>,<br/>H04L 12/56</p> <p>(21) <b>International Application Number:</b><br/>PCT/GB2004/004159</p> <p>(22) <b>International Filing Date:</b><br/>29 September 2004 (29.09.2004)</p> <p>(25) <b>Filing Language:</b> English</p> <p>(26) <b>Publication Language:</b> English</p> <p>(30) <b>Priority Data:</b><br/>0322765.9      29 September 2003 (29.09.2003)      GB<br/>0328889.1      12 December 2003 (12.12.2003)      GB</p> <p>(71) <b>Applicant (for all designated States except US):</b> <b>BRITISH TELECOMMUNICATIONS PUBLIC LIMITED COMPANY</b> [GB/GB]; 81 Newgate Street, London Greater London EC1A 7AJ (GB).</p> | <p>(72) <b>Inventors; and</b><br/>(75) <b>Inventors/Applicants (for US only):</b> <b>HILL, Alan, Michael</b> [GB/GB]; The Old Police House, Park Road, Grundisburgh, Woodbridge Suffolk IP13 6TP (GB). <b>RAFEL, Albert</b> [ES/GB]; 19 Saddlers Place, Martlesham Heath, Ipswich Suffolk IP5 3SS (GB). <b>HODGKINSON, Terence, Geoffrey</b> [GB/GB]; 46 Melton Grange Road, Melton, Woodbridge Suffolk IP12 1SD (GB).</p> <p>(74) <b>Agent:</b> <b>GEFFEN, Nigel, Paul</b>; BT Group Legal Intellectual Property Department, PPC5A, BT Centre, 81 Newgate Street, London Greater London EC1A 7AJ (GB).</p> <p>(81) <b>Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of national protection available):</b> AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NA, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG,</p> |
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- (54) Title: MATCHING PROCESS**



**(57) Abstract:** A matching method for a multi-stage switch arrangement having a plurality of logically associated inputs and a plurality of outputs, wherein the matching method comprises the steps of: for each logical association of inputs, aggregating service requests from every one of the inputs which form said logical association; resolving contention for said aggregated service requests between all of the logical associations to the outputs of the switch arrangement; and repeating the above steps in the matching method within each logical association for a subset of the inputs forming each said logical association until contention is resolved between the individual inputs of the switch arrangement and the outputs of the switch arrangement.



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